

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-10. (cancelled)

11. (new) A method of assembling a wheel drive unit comprising a rolling-bearing unit for supporting a wheel, a constant-velocity joint unit and a coupling member, to be connected to a differential gear having an output section, the constant-velocity joint unit comprising a first constant-velocity joint having an output section and an input section, the input section being connected to the output section of the differential gear, a transmission shaft having an output end and an input end, the input end of the transmission shaft being connected to the output section of the first constant-velocity joint, and a second constant-velocity joint having an input section connected to the output end of the transmission shaft, the rolling-bearing unit for supporting the wheel comprising an outer race having an outside end and being not rotatable even during use, a hub having an inside end and an outside end and a plurality of rolling bodies, the outer race having an inner peripheral surface formed with an outer-ring raceway thereon, the hub having an outer peripheral surface and comprising an installation flange for supporting the wheel, the installation flange being formed on the outer peripheral surface of the hub near the outside end on a portion that protrudes outward from the outside end of the outer race toward the outside, an inner-ring raceway that is formed near the inside end of the hub directly on the hub or by way of an inner race, such that the inner-ring raceway faces the outer-ring raceway, and a first fitting peripheral surface formed with a first spline section, the rolling bodies being rotatably located between the outer-ring raceway and the inner-ring raceway, the second constant-velocity joint comprising a second fitting peripheral surface located at an outside end thereof where the second spline section is engaged with the first spline section through a spline connection, and a housing section formed on an inside end thereof so as to function as an outer ring of the second constant-velocity joint, the coupling member being adapted to deform elastically in the radial direction and located between and engaged with the first engagement section

formed on the peripheral surface of the hub and the second engagement section formed on the peripheral surface of the second constant-velocity joint so as to position the hub and second constant-velocity joint in the axial direction, wherein the spline connection between the first and second spline sections engaged with each other is regulated in a clearance angle, wherein at least one of the transmission shaft and the second constant velocity joint including the housing section has an outer peripheral surface formed with an engagement portion, so that when the second constant velocity joint is spline-connected to a rolling bearing unit for supporting a wheel, at least one of the transmission shaft and the second constant velocity is engaged with a robot arm to prevent the robot arm from being axially displaced with reference to the at least one of the transmission shaft and the second constant velocity joint,

the method comprising the steps of:

grasping the engagement portion formed on the outer peripheral surface of the at least one of the transmission shaft and the second constant-velocity joint, supporting the rolling bearing unit for drive wheel so as not to be displaced in the retracting direction following the displacement of the robot arm, and then in this state displacing the robot arm, and making the second constant-velocity joint engaged with the rolling bearing unit for supporting the wheel through spline connection, wherein in the state where the second constant velocity joint is engaged with the rolling bearing unit for supporting the wheel through spline connection, coupling the second constant velocity joint to the rolling bearing unit for wheel support with a coupling member based on the elastic deformation thereof, and then using the robot arm to apply a force smaller than the strength of the coupling member in the direction to separate the second constant-velocity joint from the rolling bearing unit for wheel support, so as to check whether the coupling with the coupling member is securely conducted.